

## how to deal with a

# relationship break-up

### Dealing with relationship break-ups

Relationships begin and end all the time. It's a normal life experience and it doesn't mean you won't be close to someone again. A relationship break-up can be tough no matter what the situation. Everyone feels different when they're going through a break-up. It's OK to feel sad, angry or let down – lots of people do.

Sometimes you need to prioritise looking after yourself and there are things that you can do to make it easier to handle. Things like hanging out with friends, eating healthily and making sure you sleep well.



**It's OK to feel sad after a break-up and it can take time to get over the loss of a relationship**

After a break-up many people experience a range of feelings, like sadness, anger or guilt – which may lead to feeling rejected, confused or lonely. You might even feel relief, which can be just as confusing.

Some feel as though their world has turned upside down and that things will never be good again. Many feel restless, lose their appetite and have less motivation or energy to do things. It might be tempting to try and move on quickly – but it takes time, work and support.

### Actions to help you after a break-up

- Give yourself some space. It might be helpful to try to have some space from the person for a while after the break-up – this can mean online, too.
- Keep busy. You might find yourself with too much free time on your hands, especially on weekends. Plan ahead and do things that you usually enjoy.
- Talk to friends and family and others who can support you. It's OK to want some time to yourself but hanging out with supportive people can help get your mind off things, and get a different perspective.
- Take time out for you. Do things that you find relaxing, like watching a movie, playing or listening to music, meditating, reading or playing sport.
- Try not to use alcohol and other drugs to deal. While they might help you feel better at first, the after-effects will leave you feeling much worse.
- Give it time. Allow yourself time to cope with the change.
- Try to get regular sleep and exercise.

## Advice from our headspace clinicians

- It may take some time to get over. Recognise there will always be good moments and bad moments, which will turn into good days and bad days. Whatever you're feeling now won't last forever.
- If you ended a relationship it doesn't necessarily make the breakup decision any easier.
- If someone broke up with you, it doesn't mean anything is wrong with you.
- Many people feel upset or angry during this time. Always make sure you express your feelings in a safe way – for yourself and others.
- It's better to be single than in a bad relationship. Remember – you don't need a partner to feel happy.
- Try not to worry about how the situation will look to others. Now is the time to focus on your own self-care.
- A break-up is an opportunity to learn more about yourself and what you want in future relationships. Working on yourself is the best way to be in a position to have a good relationship.
- With time and support you can pull through a relationship break-up and come out as a stronger and more resilient person.

## How to break up with someone

Be considerate about how you end a relationship. Always think about how you would want to be treated in the same situation.

Try to end things in a way that respects the other person, but be honest. Be clear and tell the other person why the relationship is over. Understand that the other person might be hurt and possibly angry about your decision.

Try to end the relationship in person, rather than by text or online.

## When your ex moves on

It can be really upsetting if you find out that your ex has a new relationship. Try to avoid thinking about them being with someone else. Don't contact or post about your ex and lash out at them, because this won't make you feel any better.

If you're feeling angry or jealous when getting over a difficult break-up, it's important to remember to stay safe. Get help and talk about it with someone you trust.

## Thinking about a new relationship?

It can help to take some time out before beginning another relationship. Think about what you want in your next relationship, such as having more independence or being more honest with the other person.

Remember that being in a relationship won't necessarily make you feel happier. Getting more confident and comfortable about being single is also a healthy step.

## When to get some help

Break-ups can feel like the end of the world, but most people work through them in time and without any serious problems. Sometimes a break-up can lead to someone experiencing other problems, such as depression. These feelings can affect your daily life and stop you from doing the things you enjoy. If it's been longer than two weeks, it's time to take action.

If you feel unsafe in any way, or you're struggling to move on (for example, if you're feeling jealous or angry, or notice yourself constantly checking their online activity), it's important to talk things through with someone you trust. This may be a friend or family member. Your general practitioner (GP), a counsellor, or someone at your local **headspace** centre can also provide you with confidential support.



**If you or someone you know is going through a tough time you can get help and support from headspace, your school or university wellbeing service or your local health provider. For more information, to find your nearest headspace centre, or for online and telephone support, visit [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au)**



**If you need immediate assistance call 000 or to speak to someone urgently, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467.**

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